

Interpellation.

(ii) In view of the fact that these sets of revenues are derived mostly from people who own lands, will the Government be pleased to reconsider their proposal?

(iii) Will the Government be pleased to consider the advisability of raising additional revenues (if need be) by taxing incomes not derived from land and by imposing new export duties and raising the present rate of export duties, with a view to avoid taxing the agriculturist any further?

(iv) Will the Government be pleased to state whether, in connection with increase of taxation, they have considered the margin between the present income and expenditure of the average ryot in Travancore and satisfied themselves that the ryot can stand any further taxation?

(v) If they have, will the Government be pleased to state the result of their enquiry, and the facts elicited thereby?

(vi) Will the Government be pleased to appoint a Committee of officials and non-officials to enquire into and report upon the present economic condition of the people and to suggest ways of increasing taxation (if such increase is found necessary) without letting such enhanced taxes fall on land, either directly or indirectly?

Mr. Kayalam Parameswaran Pillai.

16. (a) Will the Government kindly lay on the table a copy of all the agreements entered into with the English firm of Messrs. Macmillan and Co., and of those entered into with the English firm of Messrs. Longmans, Green and Co., for the supply of vernacular text books for use in the schools in Travancore State?

(b) How were these vernacular text books prepared or compiled? Was it by an Editorial Committee or any other body in Travancore? Who appointed them, who fixed their remuneration and who paid it? What was the remuneration?

Answer.

(ii) Process fees and copying fees are in reality payments for services and supplies in the shape of stamp paper and labour rendered by the copyist and process server establishments. The cost of services and supplies and of labour has increased. It has consequently been proposed to raise the existing rates of these fees. The revised rates do not, in any of the cases now proposed to be revised, exceed the corresponding rates levied in the adjoining tracts.

(iii) The questions of taxing non-agricultural incomes and the levy and revision of export duties are under consideration.

(iv) (v) & (vi). The Government do not consider that an enquiry of the kind is called for at present. An economic survey would be more appropriate in connection with re-settlement.

Secretary Mr. S. Parameswara Aiyar.

16. (a) Copies of the agreements are placed on the table.

(b) The books published by Messrs. Macmillan and Co., were first compiled by an Editorial Committee of six members appointed by the Government. The remuneration to the members of the Editorial Committee was fixed by the Government at Rs. 200 each, and was paid by the firm.

The books published by Messrs. Longmans, Green and Co., were compiled by the persons selected by them. The persons selected, the manuscripts and the prices, were approved by the Director of Public Instruction. Remuneration was paid by the firm to the persons selected. The amount of the remuneration paid to these persons is not known.

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(c) Where and by which press were they (the text books) printed? Were any of them printed, bound or otherwise got up outside India?

(d) By what agency were they (the text books) sold in Travancore? Was it by the English firms direct? Had the Government any hand in the actual sale? Have they any now? If so, on what terms were such sales undertaken by the Government?

(e) What is it exactly that these English firms themselves have done and are doing in the matter of these text books? Were they acting only the part of middlemen?

(f) Do the Government know, and if so, can they state, at least approximately, what percentage of the sale price of these text books represents the profits of the above-said firms?

(g) What are the text books that are covered by the agreements with the above mentioned firms? Do they include even Malayalam copy books?

(h) Could not the preparation or compilation, the printing and other get up, and the sale of these text books have been entrusted to any firm or body in Travancore or India? Could not the Government themselves have undertaken these, if no other person or body in Travancore could do them?

(i) Will the Government kindly explain the reasons which led to the grant of the contracts to the above-mentioned firms?

(j) Was it, virtually a monopoly given to them?

Answer.

(c) The books published by Messrs. Macmillan and Co., were printed at the Basel Mission Press, Mangalore. The books published by Messrs. Longmans, Green and Co., were printed at the O. M. S. Press, Kottayam, while the copy books published by the firm were printed in England.

(d) In regard to books published by Messrs. Macmillan and Co., they were sold for the first two years under departmental supervision. For a period of two years from Edavam 1022, the sale was given on contract to a private agent. From Edavam 1034, the sale was again taken up by the department. The terms of the sale are stipulated in Clause 5 of the agreement with the firm.

In regard to the books published by Messrs. Longmans, Green and Co., the Company have employed their own agents for the sale of the books.

(e) The English firms have utilised their long experience and expert knowledge in the get up of these books. They have, in particular, arranged for good illustrations, the engravings for which were done in England. They were not intended to act the part of middlemen.

(f) Government have no information on the point.

(g) The agreement with Messrs. Macmillan and Co., covers Malayalam Readers I to VI. The agreement with Messrs. Longmans, Green and Co. relates to the following Malayalam books and publications:—

1. Geography of Travancore.
2. Geography of the Madras Presidency.
3. Do. of the World, Part I.
4. Translation of the History of India Pre-Mussalman period—published in English by Rao Bahadur K. V. Rangaswami Aiyangar.
5. Stories from Travancore History.
6. Do. from European History.
7. Brief History of Travancore.
8. Malayalam copy books Nos. I to V.
9. Stories from Indian History.

(h) To the knowledge of Government, there was no firm in Travancore that had the experience or expert knowledge possessed by these firms at the time when the above contracts were entered into; nor did they expect that Indian firms outside Travancore would offer to produce books so well got up. The Government at that time were not prepared to take upon themselves the duty of producing and selling text books.

(i) The reasons have already been mentioned.

(j) Yes.

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(k) Have they paid anything to the Government for getting these contracts?

(l) Were the contracts given to these firms after publicly calling for tenders or by public auction?

(m) For what period was each of the contracts entered into, with these firms?

(n) Are not the Government aware that the said contracts are open to serious objection and that they have been adversely criticised by the public?

(o) Are not the Government aware of the criticisms urged against the said contracts in the Popular Assembly, especially at the eleventh and twelfth sessions? (See pp. 84, 100 and 102 of the printed proceedings of the eleventh session and pp. 101 of the printed proceedings of the twelfth session.)

(p) Were the contracts with either of these firms renewed or confirmed even after the above-said criticisms were made, and if so, will the Government kindly explain why it was so done?

(q) Can the Government give an assurance that such contracts will not be made at least in the future, and that, if it is legally allowable, they will take steps to cancel the contracts already entered into and yet in force?

17. (a) Will the Government kindly state whether they accept the principle that, in regard to abkari administration relating to country liquor, the *complete* excise system is superior to other systems, and whether it is not the policy of Government to introduce the former system throughout the whole of the State, and if not, will the Government kindly state the reasons for the Government view?

(b) Does not the former system further the declared policy of Government of deriving "a maximum revenue from a minimum consumption"?

(c) Will the Government kindly state when the excise system was first introduced in Travancore?

(d) Will the Government kindly state the places in Travancore where the complete excise system prevails now and why it has not been introduced throughout the whole of the State till now?

(e) Will the Government kindly state also why the independent shop system in regard to toddy is not introduced in the taluks of Shortallai (minus that portion of it which lies within the Alleppey Municipality) Vaikam, Kunnathnad, Alangad, and Parur, although in these very taluks the said system was introduced six years ago in regard to arrack, and although, even in regard to toddy, the said system has been prevailing throughout the

Answer.

(k) No.

(l) No.

(m) The period of agreement with Messrs. Macmillan and Co., is ten years from the date of publication of each separate reader; *vide* Clause 12 of the agreement; and that with Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co., is seven years from the date of the first publication of each separate book; *vide* Clause 8 of the agreement.

(n) & (o) The Government are aware of the criticisms against the contracts. They do not admit that the contracts are open to serious objection.

(p) The agreement with Messrs. Macmillan & Co., was revised in 1919 to suit altered conditions.

(q) Government cannot give an undertaking in advance. The questions connected with each contract must be disposed of as they arise with reference to the conditions existing at that time.

17. (a) If by the expression "complete excise system" the member means "the independent shop system" it is superior to the farming system, and the policy of Government has been to gradually introduce the former system throughout Travancore.

(b) Yes.

(c) If by the "excise system" the member means "the independent shop system", it was introduced in 1073 M. E.

(d) to (h) The independent shop system in regard to arrack prevails throughout the whole State except the Devicolum taluk where the farming system still prevails. It has not been introduced in that taluk for want of transport facilities for the regular supply of arrack from the State Distillery. As regards toddy, the independent shop system prevails in all the taluks except the following:—Shortallai, Vaikam, Kunnathnad, Alangad, Parur and Devicolum. There is no consumption of toddy in the last-mentioned taluk. The other five taluks are all bordering on the Cochin State. The chief reason for not introducing the